



**GENERAL MEETING OF THE  
HEREFORD DIOCESAN BOARD OF FINANCE**

and

**GENERAL MEETING OF THE  
HEREFORD DIOCESAN SYNOD**

**Proclaiming Christ – Growing Disciples**

**Shared Priorities**

- Spiritual & Numerical Growth
- Contributing to the Common Good
- Reimagining Ministry, Prayer & Worship

## Minutes of Meeting Thursday 7 July 2016

Constituency	Total	Vacant	Attended	Apologies	No Indication
Bishops	2	0	2	0	0
Clergy	59	20	24	7	8
Laity	66	11	36	13	6
Lay Co-Chairs	13	1	11	0	1
Rural Deans	13	0	5	7	1
Clergy Co-options	5	5	0	0	0
Lay Co-Options	5	5	0	0	0
Clergy Ex Officio	5	0	4	0	1
Lay Ex Officio	7	0	2	0	5
Bishop's Nominee	10	8	0	1	1
Total Places	185	50	84	28	23
Total Filled	135	Quorum =	45		

### Opening Worship

Led by Bridgnorth Deanery.

### ITEM 1 – Apologies & Welcome

- 1.1 28 members as indicated above.
- 1.2 Bishop Richard welcomed Mr Sam Pratley, the Diocesan Secretary designate, who takes up his post on 25 July 16.

### ITEM 2 – Minutes of the Previous Meetings (5 Mar 15)

- 2.1 Approved.
- 2.2 No Matters Arising.

### ITEM 3 – Presidential Address

- 3.1 Text of the address to Synod by Bishop Richard may be found at Annex A.

## ITEM 4 – Diocesan Mission Action Planning (MAPping)

- 4.1 Synod was briefed on, and invited to approve, the Diocesan MAPping process. Key points highlighted by Revd Margaret Jones included:
- a. The MAPping framework being presented flowed out of conversations in last autumn's Follow! events and local conversations through the Spring, using the Follow! conversation cards, encouraging exploration of: "What do we hear God calling us to be and to do in the time and the places we are set as disciples, churches, parishes, benefices, deaneries, together as a diocese?"
  - b. The framework invited everyone to share in God's mission together, making our own decisions about what we will do, but with shared vision, values and priorities across our diocese and the wider church.
  - c. Sometimes it's just about making simple changes and improvements, "one degree shifts", to enhance what we do to encourage growth to take place spiritually and numerically.
  - d. The danger with anything that has "Diocesan" in its title was that sense of someone telling us what to do, but that's not the case – it's very much the other way round. The work of Diocesan Support Ministers is to serve God's mission worked out through the mission and ministry of everyone working together across our diocese, so limited resources can be applied to maximum effect.
  - e. The MAPping framework aimed to keep three Shared Priorities central. These were the goals the whole CofE had set itself:
    - Spiritual and numerical growth (SP1)
    - Contributing to the common good (SP2)
    - Re-imagining ministry for the 21<sup>st</sup> century (SP3)
- 4.2 Lizzie Hackney (Children & Families Support Officer) and her Assistant, Kathy Bland, spoke on SP1 and included quotes from people at Messy Church and Follow! SP1 was all about growing disciples and churches of all ages, where all have the opportunity to hear the Gospel message and respond to it. As support staff they work closely together to help parishes and have many resources that can be borrowed.
- 4.3 Chrissie Pepler (Community Link Development Officer) spoke on SP2 and emphasised the importance of reaching out and of building relationships; within communities and with other organisations and statutory bodies. Responses to a national survey highlighted strongly that a church comes alive when it reaches out "... giving practical help or support to those in need in our community and world". Practical help can manifest in all kinds of social projects, food banks, good neighbour schemes, combating loneliness – all are part of contributing to the common good.
- 4.4 Neil Patterson, (Diocesan Director of Vocations & Ordinands) spoke on SP3 and stated that everything in ministry is to support and enable the first two Shared Priorities. Future stipendiary clergy numbers are expected to fall and it already proves difficult to recruit new clergy to this very rural diocese. One project aimed at helping with both issues, is "Discover" and Neil introduced Ed and Jo, two of the current three interns. The interns are working alongside clergy in parishes, learning what parish ministry involves in practice, as well as doing coursework with WEMTC. It is hoped this will enable them to discern if parish ministry is where their call to minister is leading them.

- 4.5 The following comments were made by members:
- a. Need to build and encourage “healthy churches” that reach out to all ages. Jesus built a small group and sent them out to encourage & apprentice others. Need to create models and plant elsewhere (like Alpha courses).
  - b. Concern that resources are not simply targeted on ‘mission projects’, but also on the long term outside of those projects, i.e. who/what picks up where Parent Toddlers / Schools finish? Conversations are needed on the wider background.
  - c. Leadership is vital and healthy churches are needed for every step along the way so that those who are encouraged to join us in faith will then choose to stay.
  - d. Reaching out is important to all faiths and to those with no faith, especially so in the uncertainty and racism that have surfaces in the aftermath of the EU Referendum.

- 4.6 Synod was invited to approve the Diocesan MAPPING process and support the following motion:

*“This Synod supports and adopts the framework for Diocesan Mission Action Planning as set out in Agenda Paper 4.1”*

*Proposed from the Chair*

*Secoded: Revd Chris Moore*

**FOR: 83**

**AGAINST: 0**

**ABSTAINED: 1**

#### **ITEM 5 – Parish “Offer” Scheme**

- 5.1 Synod were briefed on initial parish offers (to date) to the Common Fund and the potential impact on the 2017 budget.
- 5.2 Every PCC was asked to meet by 10 June and to consider prayerfully how much to contribute towards the Common Fund for 2017. Deanery leadership teams have worked hard to liaise with parishes and record the offers made. Approximately 10% of our 360 parishes had still to send in formal offers, and deanery leaders are following up with these parishes to encourage prompt submissions.
- 5.3 56% of parishes made offers greater than their giving in 2016, an increase of £94k. However, 40% offered a total of £454k below 2016 giving resulting in a net reduction of £360k. Only one of 13 deaneries was contributing enough to cover the cost of ministry in the parishes.
- 5.4 In 2014 the diocese had a ‘structural’ deficit of £315k – i.e. parish share covered £3.9m of stipendiary clergy costs against an actual cost of £4.2m. This deficit went down in 2015 and 2016 but was likely to increase substantially to £414k in the 2017 forecast.
- 5.5 This level of deficit could not be sustained for any length of time as Hereford was not, contrary to some people’s ideas, a rich diocese and needs to be in balance by the end of 2019 at the latest.
- 5.6 Deanery leadership teams and Synod members were urged to consider how they might facilitate more collaborative discussions across parishes / benefices to achieve sustainable increases in the levels of contribution towards parish ministry in 2017 and beyond. Deaneries and benefices were also encouraged to focus on growth initiatives embedded in forward-looking Mission Action Plans, since income levels tend to rise naturally where churches grow numerically and spiritually.

- 5.7 Every deanery would be asked to complete a Mission Action Plan to help achieve the diocesan objectives of spiritual and numerical growth. Some difficult issues would need to be tackled and this will depend on leadership, both lay and ordained, at diocesan, deanery and local level
- 5.8 The Bishop's Council Budget Review Group met on 27 June to begin to discuss some potential cost reduction and income generation options for recommendation to the Bishop's Council later in the summer.
- 5.9 The following points and comments were made by members:
- a. When asked, it was found that only around 5-10% of Synod members' parishes had a Stewardship campaign in the previous year, with a similar quantity in the previous 3 years, and also only 5-10% were known to have a Stewardship campaign planned for next year.
  - b. What would happen if the Diocese did not have enough cash? If vacancies are not filled, who decides which ones? If parishes are deemed no longer viable, who decides which ones? What structure was in place to deal with this scenario?  
In response to the question of who would decide if any clergy were not to be replaced; that decision would be made locally.
  - c. Each benefice needed to review their parishes' offers then deaneries needed to review the offers within each benefice. The system wouldn't work without mutual support.
  - d. The Baptist ministry has no 'diocesan centre'; each church has to fund its own minister who could be anything from full time or a House for Duty with a separate, part time lay worker. After a new member of the congregation had been attending for a while, they would discuss becoming a member of the church and talk about commitment both spiritually and financially. Many CofE clergy do not like to talk about finances.
  - e. Synod/DBF had voted to use and promote the MAP – it needed funding to succeed. Everyone has to pull together and work to keep the church alive.
  - f. The church needs to be recapitalised; a suggestion was for every landowner/farmer to donate one acre to the church, to give it a new capital base to use for income.
  - g. Vigorous and careful stewardship was crucial. The Cathedral had a stewardship project biannually and found that a comparative table showing levels of giving worked well. For example, they had found that of their 250 givers around 50% gave under £5pw – seeing that published in a table encouraged many to greater generosity.
- 5.10 Members noted that Hereford Diocese was not cash-rich; most of its money was tied up in parsonages. Without a change, funds would run out within 3 years.

#### **ITEM 6 – Draft 2017 Budget**

- 6.1 Synod were briefed on the draft 2017 budget. The draft contained 'raw' data not yet subjected to detailed review and challenge, and was the total of initial bids for funding from Diocesan departments plus known costs of parish ministry and contribution to central church costs. Further work would be carried out between this and the October meeting of Synod to close the gap between available resources and the funding requirements.
- 6.2 Synod noted that 75% of congregations number less than 20; as noted in Item 5, offers from parishes were still arriving; half the deaneries were financially weak; Parish Share arrears in some deaneries were growing; there had been a steady decline in collection of Parish Share over 3 years; at the half year point, collection was 12% (£0.25m) short; without drastic change, the money would run out within 3 years.

- 6.3 A Budget Review Group (BRG) would be scrutinising budget bids; review sessions with budget holders were planned for July & August, and every line of expenditure would be challenged, including within the remaining 2016 Budget. The BRG will recommend options to reduce the structural budget deficit for consideration by DBFX and Bishop's Council in their September meetings.
- 6.4 Meanwhile, deanery leadership teams would be supporting benefices and parishes seeking to identify ways to increase the level of their financial contributions.
- 6.5 The following points and comments were made:
- a. If the diocese were a business, it would already be looking at which churches to close and which clergy to lose.
  - b. The Diocese cannot go on as it is; must have growth or die.
  - c. So far have discussed the plan, now need the action to make it work – and to do that, the diocese needs funding. It's up to Synod members to go back to their deaneries and make people understand.
- 6.6 A final 2017 budget will be presented to Diocesan Synod for approval in October.

#### **ITEM 7 – Safeguarding**

- 7.1 Mandy McPhee, the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser, briefed Synod on safeguarding matters both nationally and within the diocese and set out the Diocesan Safeguarding Strategy for 2016 to 2018.
- 7.2 Safeguarding had changed radically in the last few years, largely due to a series of national events including high profile cases involving the Church. Bishops continued to hold ultimate responsibility for the implementation and enforcement of national safeguarding policies, practices and training in their dioceses. However, just as the national debate on safeguarding had expanded, so had the national Church's work in this area, and the work that was expected to be done in each diocese.
- 7.3 The new Safeguarding Strategy and Action plan aimed to set out exactly what Hereford Diocese needed to do to ensure all activities connected with the church were safe for both children and adults. Every element of safeguarding delivery was included and it would serve as the blue print for all future activity, as well as provide an effective means by which to map progress.
- 7.4 The Diocese needed to introduce a new safeguarding governance structure consisting of a new Diocesan Safeguarding Scrutiny Panel (DSSP), below which would sit the Diocesan Safeguarding Working Group (DSWG).
- 7.5 The DSSP would consist of key people drawn from senior diocesan personnel and statutory partnership agencies and lead by our current independent chair. It would meet once per year to scrutinise the adequacy of the safeguarding arrangements in place in the Diocese. In advance of its yearly meeting, the panel would be furnished with documentation and have the option to call diocesan staff to attend and discuss arrangements. The Panel would then deliberate over the strategy and annual self-assessment and sign off the Diocesan Safeguarding Strategy and Action Plan, which would then inform the work streams going forward for the DSWG. The strategy & plan, once approved by the Panel, would also be brought back to Diocesan Synod annually in order for Synod to be satisfied that safeguarding arrangements were adequate and had statutory partnership endorsement.

- 7.6 The DSWG would consist of key personnel from within the diocese and cathedral, meet bi-monthly and be chaired by the current independent chair. Its role would be to take forward all work streams within the strategy & action plan.
- 7.7 The following points and comments were made:
- a Commend the enormous work put into the strategy & plan. Observation that it was inward looking; should take a leading role in the wider community.
  - b The documents covered what needed to be done but Synod can't just approve the documents then sit back. Action was needed in the parishes, and Parish Offer levels needed to cover the additional cost.
  - c CofE was the first to offer testimony to the national "Goddard Enquiry" into safeguarding and had responded to 4 information requests from that Enquiry. Paperwork going back 50 years would be examined and the existing strategy, policies & procedures were included in its general review. The public hearing was expected to be held in early 2017.
  - d Separate to the Goddard Enquiry was the "Truth Project" which invited victims to past abuse to come forward, and which could expose more as yet unknown cases.
  - e Victims of bullying automatically become vulnerable adults.
  - f Many parishes do not have a safeguarding representative, but rather share a benefice safeguarding representative.
  - g Clarification of "spiritual abuse" mentioned in the Strategy was very difficult and could include a number of issues in the manner of leading worship, being over-authoritative, pressurised financially. More information was being sought, some additional training may be required, re-brief Synod once clear.

7.8 Synod was invited to consider the following motion:-

*"This Synod supports and adopts the Diocesan Safeguarding Strategy and Action Plan 2016 to 2018 as set out in Agenda Papers 7.2 & 7.3"*

*Proposed from the Chair*

*Seconded: Revd Neil Patterson*

**FOR: 84**

**AGAINST: 0**

**ABSTAINED: 0**

## **ITEM 8 – Dignity at Work Policy**

- 8.1 The draft "Dignity at Work" policy was presented to the March 16 meeting of Synod after which it had been sent to all PCCS and Clergy with an invitation to comment.
- 8.2 Specific comment was received from 5 individuals correcting textural errors and suggesting points for strengthening and/or clarifying sections of the policy. Many of these suggestions have been incorporated but there had been no substantive change to the draft considered by the March Synod.
- 8.3 The following points and comments were made:
- a The issue of bullying was included in the Safeguarding Strategy.
  - b Dignity at Work was a national CofE policy, so the Hereford document was intended to stay as close to theirs as possible, but allowing some local refinement.
  - c It was unclear where and how the policy would be used and monitored. There was no guidance for individuals on where to go, what to do, how to deal with, bullying.

- d. An objection had been lodged to the description “superior strength”, preferring instead “unreasonable strength”. That had been amended (page 2), but the definition of bullying quoted from the Oxford English Dictionary, which referred to “superior strength” was still included (page 6). Agreed this would also be amended.

8.4 Synod was invited to consider the following motion:-

*“This Synod supports and adopts the Diocesan “Dignity at Work” policy and directs that it be sent to every Parochial Church Council for implementation.”*

*Proposed from the Chair*

*Seconded: Revd Paul Towner*

**FOR: 83**

**AGAINST: 0**

**ABSTAINED: 1**

#### **ITEM 9 - 2015 Summarised Annual Group Report and Accounts**

9.1 In accordance with Article 81 of the Diocesan Synod Standing Orders, as amended by Synod in July 2015, the Executive Committee of the Board of Finance presented to Synod the Summarised Annual Group Report and Accounts for the year ending 31 December 2015.

9.2 A copy of the full statutory Group Annual Report and Accounts (50 pages) may be obtained, on request, from the Diocesan Office, Hereford and will be available, in due course, on the Charity Commission website at <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/charity-commission>

9.3 Synod noted that:

- a. Parishes had contributed 92% of Parish Share (94% in 2014), but investment income was 5% higher largely due to higher dividend yields. Trust, rental and other income of £363k was £71k below 2014 levels due to lower net recoveries on disposal of redundant churches. Statutory fee income of £359k was 2% higher than in 2014.
- b. Resourcing ministry & mission included £3,443k spent on parish ministry (13% below budget due mainly to clergy vacancies and to a change in the treatment of pensions), £1,101k on direct support for ministry, and £120k on housing improvements. Parish Share rebate of £42k was £12k below budget reflecting the poorer collection rate during the year.
- c. Contributions to Archbishops’ Council of £361k were on budget and £8k below 2014 levels. Parochial support of £244k was £35k below 2014 due to a lower spend related to the disposal of redundant churches. Education support to CofE schools of £385k was £148k above budget due largely to a grant of £120k to support the work of the Bishop Anthony Educational Trust.

9.4 Synod was invited to receive the Summarised Annual Group Report and Accounts for the year ending 31 December 2015:

*Proposed from the Chair*

*Seconded: Mr Nat Hone*

**FOR: 84**

**AGAINST: 0**

**ABSTAINED: 0**

#### **ITEM 10 – Farewell to Outgoing Diocesan Secretary**

10.1 Bishop Richard, on behalf of Diocesan Synod, bid an informal formal farewell to Mr John Clark the outgoing Diocesan Secretary, presenting him with a card and small gift.

**ITEM 11 - Any Other Business**

11.1 There was none.

**ITEM 12– Dates of Future Meetings**

12.1

<b>Meeting</b>	<b>Date of Meeting</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Notes</b>
DBFX	Tues 26 Jul 16	1400	Hereford	
DBFX	Tues 6 Sep 16	1400	Ludlow	
B Council	Thurs 15 Sep 16	1900	Hereford	
DBF/Synod	Thurs 20 Oct 16	1900	Ludlow	
DBFX	Tues 8 Nov 16	1400	Hereford	
B Council	Thurs 17 Nov 16	1900	LMC	

Chairman: ..... Date: .....

**Presidential Address to Synod – 7 July 2016**